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Repairs to the Karai Eri in Gingee taluk.

* 367 *Q.*—SRI K. ARANGANATHAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Public Works be pleased to state for how long the repairs to the Karai Eri have been pending in Gingee taluk, South Arcot district?

THE HON. RAJA SRI SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI :—" Sanction to repairs to the tank was accorded in February 1953 and work has been pending as the original contractor entrusted with the work defaulted and the new contractor who was subsequently engaged could not proceed with the work as the tank had meanwhile received supplies. It is expected that the work will be taken up by the end of January 1954."

SRI K. ARANGANATHAN :—" May I know why there was default on the part of the contractor? "

THE HON. RAJA SRI SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI :—" The Government cannot give an explanation for the failure of the contractor."

SRI K. PARTHASARATHY :—" Are the Government aware that in backward areas like Gingee and Kallakurichi, contractors are not coming forward to execute contracts and whether in such places, will the Government take up the execution of such works themselves? "

THE HON. RAJA SRI SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI :—" Sir, is it the intention of the hon. Member to discourage the local people from getting contracts? "

Tanks maintained by the Public Works Department in Gingee taluk.

* 368 *Q.*—SRI K. ARANGANATHAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Public Works be pleased to state the total number of tanks under the Public Works Department in Gingee taluk?

THE HON. RAJA SRI SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI :—" The total number of tanks under the Public Works Department in Gingee Taluk is 48."

SRI K. ARANGANATHAN :—" May I know what is the amount that was spent last year? "

THE HON. RAJA SRI SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI :—" I have no information on hand at present, Sir."

Abolition of district boards.

* 369 *Q.*—SRI P. RANGASWAMI REDDIAR : Will the Hon. the Minister for Local Administration be pleased to state—

(*a*) the special reasons for the proposal to abolish the district boards and revive taluk boards; and

(*b*) the savings to Government, if any, by such a proposal?

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THE HON. SRI K. RAJARAM :—" (a) & (b) The reasons will be explained when the Bill for extending the term of the Special Officers for District Boards till the end of June 1954 comes up before this House. The scheme of decentralization of district boards must stand or fall on its own merits in regard to better administration, and it is not expected or intended, to yield any savings to the Government."

SRI P. RANGASWAMI REDDIAR :—" May I know when the Bill is likely to be introduced here? "

THE HON. SRI K. RAJARAM :—" The Bill which I have referred to in my answer will be introduced either in the present sitting of the House or in February."

SRI V. BALAKRISHNAN :—" Will the Government usher in this much-needed and eagerly awaited reform at an early date? "

THE HON. SRI K. RAJARAM :—" As I said already, the Bill referred to in my original answer will be introduced in the present session or in February."

SRI V. GOPALA GOUNDER :—" The question is, whether there were any special reasons for the proposal and that has not been answered, Sir? "

THE HON. SRI K. RAJARAM :—" When the Bill comes up before the House, all those matters could be discussed and I will be able to give much more information then, Sir."

SRI P. RANGASWAMI REDDIAR :—" Are these reasons given just to postpone the elections to district boards or is there any *bona fide* intention on the part of the Government to abolish these district boards and revive taluk boards on the ground of better administration? "

THE HON. SRI K. RAJARAM :—" The Bill is intended to conduct the elections before June, Sir."

Subsidy for the gruel centres.

* 370 *Q.*—SRI A. RATNAM : Will the Hon. the Minister for Land Revenue be pleased to state whether the Government are subsidizing the gruel centres managed by the Corporation of Madras and private organizations in the State for weavers?

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU NAICKER :—" All the weavers' gruel centres in the State except four centres in the rural areas of Malabar recently opened are fully financed by the Government. In the case of the four centres, excepted centres, the Government are subsidising 50 per cent of their cost."

SRI A. RATNAM :—" சென்னையில் 500 ஏழை நெசவாளர்களுக்கு மார்ச் மாதம் வரை கஞ்சி ஊற்றவேண்டும் என்று அரசாங்கம் நகர சபைக்கு கட்டளையிட்டிருக்கிறார்கள். ஏப்ரல் மாதம் கோடை காலம்